

Story #228 (Milli Kütüphane Tape)

Narrator: Saliha Arel

Location: Sivas

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The Substitute Bride

Tek

Once there was and once there was not, when the creatures of God were many and it was a sin to talk too much--when the sieve was in the hay--when I was rocking my mother's cradle <sup>or on</sup> tingir mingir--there was a poor man and his wife. They were so poor they did not have any bread to eat nor wood to burn, and the woman was going to have a baby.

And the woman one day said, "How are we going to have this baby? We are so poor."

The man said, "I shall ask for the key of the <sup>both, full</sup> hamam from the hamamcı. It is nice and hot there, and that is where you are going to have the baby."

And the woman said, "What could I do there? I will be afraid there at night in the hamam with the <sup>Jinns</sup> genies and fairies."\*

"What else can we do?" said the man. "You would be frozen here. We have no wood, no fire."

And when the woman was ready to have the baby, the man ran to the hamamcı and said, "My wife is going to have a baby. Our house is cold. Can she have her baby here where it is nice and warm?"

\*Turkish baths are widely believed to be haunted by night. The "little folk" of Turkish tradition use the large rooms of the bath for their nightly revels. A standard tekerleme refers to the time when "jinns played polo in the old hamam." The widely distributed tale about the Wednesday Witches' curing the deformity of a hunchback is set in a Turkish bath.

He took the woman to the hamam, turned the lights on, and left her there. While she was waiting there to have her baby, a great big Arap with one lip <sup>tears</sup> down on the ground and the other up in the sky came and said, "Selâm."

And "Selâm!" answered the young woman, trembling all over.

The Arap said, "Do not be afraid. I shall not do you any harm, and I shall help you." And she was helped, and gave birth to a little baby girl. And Arap brought everything for the baby--shirts and underwear and wrappings, and everything that the baby needed--and she was very nicely washed and wrapped and put in a corner.

Then the other fairies came, and one said, "May pearls and corals pour from her eyes whenever she cries." And another said, "May pink roses bloom on her cheeks whenever she laughs." A third one said, "May green grass grow on the ground wherever she treads." gold whenever she is washed."

The fairies washed the young woman, and then they began to dance. "Come and dance with us," they said. And the young woman got up to dance with them.

"Çarşambadır, Çarşamba! Perşembedir, Persembe! Cuma--dır, Cuma-a-a!"

fairies said as they danced.

And "Çarşambadır, Çarşamba! Perşembedir, Persembe! Cuma-a-a-dır, Cuma-a-a!" the young woman said, exactly as they did, and she danced and danced with

After the fairies had gone, the husband came, and saw he had a beautiful little girl all nicely wrapped, and sleeping there snug and warm. He wrapped them both up well and put them on a cart and took them home. They were so poor it is like nothing you know

The woman told him everything that had happened--how a great big Arap with one lip down on the ground and the other up in the sky had come and helped her with the birth of the baby, and had brought wrappings for the baby and cared

*tears are black from*

*Tears on pink (59-60) Rose from smile (59-60)*

*Green grass beneath feet of her (59-60)*

*Çarşamba and Perşembe (59-60)*

for it, how the fairies had come and given the baby four good wishes, the first one saying "May pearls and corals pour from her eyes whenever she cries," second one saying, "May pink roses bloom on her cheeks whenever she laughs," the third one saying, "May green grass grow on the ground wherever she treads," and the fourth saying, "May water turn into gold whenever she is washed." she told him she had danced with the fairies, saying, "Çarşambadır, Çarşamba! Perşembedir, Perşembe! Cuma-a-a-dır, Cuma-a-a!" exactly as they were saying it.

"I wonder if it is all true?" the man said. And he went and found some little sticks and made a little fire. He heated some water and poured it over the baby's head and, sure enough, jush came the gold! "Oh, woman, woman, God has granted us this stately child!" And he got that money and he went and bought some wood and he bought some food and he bought whatever they needed. In the evening they washed the baby again.

They got so that they were very, very rich. And when the child laughed, roses bloomed on her cheeks. When she cried, pearls and corals poured from her eyes. And wherever she put her feet, the green grass grew. "Praise her!" they said, and they were very, very happy.

Now the woman had a sister who was also expecting a baby, and she said, "How did you acquire all this wealth?"

The first woman told her, "Well, our house was very cold, and when it was time for me to have my baby, my husband went to the hamamcı and asked him for the key to the hamam. I went there where it was nice and warm, and while I was waiting to have the baby a great big Arap with one lip down on the ground and the other up in the sky came and greeted me and helped me have my baby, and washed and dressed it. Then the fairies came in. One said, 'May pearls and corals pour from her eyes whenever she cries.' The second said, 'May pink roses bloom on her cheeks whenever she laughs.' The third one said, 'May green grass

grow on the ground wherever she treads.' And the fourth one said, 'May water turn into gold whenever she is washed. And then the fairies danced, saying, 'Çarşambadır, Çarşamba! Perşembedir, Perşembe! Cuma-a-a-dır, Cuma-a-a-!' And I said what they said, and I danced with them."

The woman's sister went home and told her husband, "You take me to the hamam, too, when it is time for the baby to come." And so he took her there.

While she was sitting by the kurna [water catchment basin] waiting for the birth of her baby, there came the great big Arap, with one lip down on the ground and the other up in the sky, and the Arap said to her, "What are you doing here?"

"Go to the depths of Hell!" the woman answered. "What is it to you? And why did you come here?"

The Arap did not like this, and went away. Later the fairies came. helped the woman have her baby, but when it came to saying their wishes, one said, "Let the ass's boil grow on her forehead," and they did not say anything else.

When they started dancing, they asked the woman to come and join them. But whenever they said, "Çarşambadır, Çarşamba!" she said, "No! Perşembedir, Perşembe!" and when they said, "Cuma-a-a-dır, Cuma-a-a!" she said, "No! Salı-ı-ı-dır, Salı-ı-ı!"

They were angry with her, and they said, "You go to the depths of Hell!" and the boil started growing on the forehead of the child.

In the morning the husband came, and he saw the baby. But there was something on the forehead of the infant. She said, "We have a daughter, too, but we had a curse instead of good wishes, and look what she has on her forehead!" So they took the baby home.

Both children grew up, and the name of the first girl went all over the

land and to the far countries. They said, "There is a girl in such and such a country, and when she laughs, roses bloom on her cheeks, and when she cries, pearls and corals pour from her eyes, and when she's washed the water becomes gold, and on the ground where she treads, green grass grows." And everybody was curious about this. The King of India's son heard about it, and it seems he was very fond of things like that. He insisted that his father ask the hand of the girl for him in marriage. "All right," he said. "If that is what you want, we shall get her for you."

They came to see the girl, and it was true enough. She was as beautiful as angels and hyacinths, and as she came to kiss their hands, grass grew on the ground she trod. They asked for the girl by the will of God to marry their son.\* Well, the man and his wife were so rich that they did not care whom she married. They had sacks full of gold--oh, they had piles of gold. So they said, "All right, if you want her, we shall give her to you."

The King of India said, "Well, we shall have this girl, but when it is time for the wedding we shall get everything ready and you will send the girl to our country."

And the girl's mother said, "All right. We shall do that."

So the wedding preparations started in both places. When it was time for the girl to go, the girl's aunt said to her sister, "Sister, how can you send her with strangers? It is only fitting that someone kin to her--like me--should take her to India."

\*This is an abbreviated form of the matchmaker's (or dünür's) formulaic statement to the parents of the girl: "I have come by the will of Allah and with the permission of the Prophet to ask for the hand of your daughter in marriage to X."

The full statement is implicit for Turkish listeners in the telescoped phrase "by the will of God."



The mother said, "Sure enough. You must do that." And they' decided that the aunt would take the girl to India. They got ready, and the aunt took her own daughter along, too.

They got into the carriage and started on the way. Of course, they had things to eat in the carriage. After a while, the girl on whose cheeks roses bloomed when she laughed, and from whose eyes pearls and corals poured when she cried, felt very hungry, and she said, "Please, Auntie, I am very hungry. Can you give me anything to eat?"

The auntie, the bad woman that she was, had prepared some sort of food, some pastry [çörek], but it was full of salt. It was so salty--oh, so salty!--that when the poor girl ate a piece as big as a hand all her insides began burning and scorching, and of course she became very, very thirsty. And she said, "Auntie, I am very, very thirsty. Could you please find some water for me?"

The aunt said, "Do not be foolish, girl Where can I find water at the foot of the mountains here? Only," she said, "as I have heard, there is a place by the foot of that mountain where they sell a bowl of water for an eye. If you are willing to give one of your eyes to me, I shall fetch a bowl of water for you."

Eye - m  
sucking for drink  
of water

The girl said, "Oh, Auntie, I am so thirsty I shall not be able to resist it. You had better take one of my eyes and give me a bowl of water." So the aunt dug one of the girl's eyes out and put it in her pocket. She had a bowl of water hidden somewhere, and she took it out and gave it to the girl.

They went on for a little while, and the thing the girl ate was so salty that she could not quench her thirst, and she began asking for some more water. She said, "Please, Auntie, will you not find another bowl of water for me?"

The aunt said, "What can I do? There is only water here for an eye. By

that hill, too, there is a place where they have water for an eye. If you want another bowl of water, you must give your other eye to me."

"All right," said the girl. "I must give my eye." So the aunt took the other eye out of its place and put it in her pocket. When the girl could not see any more, the aunt pushed her out of the carriage and into a well that was *pit* there. She put her own daughter in the place of the beautiful girl on whose cheeks roses bloomed when she laughed, and from whose eyes pearls and corals poured when she cried. *substitute bride*

She took her own daughter, with the big boil--the ass's boil--on her forehead, only she had it bandaged. When they arrived in the land where the other girl was expected, they were greeted with all the grandeur fit for a king's wedding. All the soldiers, and the bands, and the crowds cheering and everything--all met them. But when they saw the bride coming, they said, "Well, did our King's son go and choose such an ugly woman? She is not pretty at all! Is she fit to be a king's wife?"

In the evening, when the bridegroom went into the room he found out that this was not the girl he was expecting, because this one was so ugly. When he said, "What happened to you? Why did you change so much?" she said, "What do you expect?" I have been on the road for days and days, and I am tired--I am exhausted." And while they were in the room, all night long the prince heard a gnawing and scratching kind of noise coming from his bride. In the morning, he asked, "What was it you were doing all night long? What was that sound?"

"Oh," she said, "I had some crackers in my pocket left from the trip, and I thought I was hungry, so I ate them."

And the prince said, "What is that on your head?"

The bride said, "Oh, I have a headache." And it went on and on. For and days she kept on complaining, "I have a headache. I have a headache."

And the prince said, "What about the roses that bloom on your cheeks when you laugh, and the pearls and corals that pour down from your eyes when you cry?"

" she said, "everything has a time and place." Let us leave them there and come back to the beautiful girl, who kept on crying and moaning, hungry and thirsty in the depths of the well.

65-68 When she was crying and moaning in despair, there happened to be an old shepherd passing by. He heard this sound, and he looked around and he finally went to the well. He went to the well and leaned down, and he saw a beautiful girl, beautiful as angels, on the point of dying. He said, "What are you doing there?" and without waiting for an answer he climbed down the well and took her out. What he saw was that the girl had neither of her two eyes. He took pity on her and he took her home. When they got home, he said to his wife, "Look, I have brought a nice girl home for you."

And the wife said, "Are you gone mad? What shall I do with a girl who has no eyes?"

The poor shepherd said, "Oh, but it is sinful to talk like that. Please, my wife," said he, "she is so thirsty and hungry and dusty and dirty. Please get some water heated and let us wash her a little and get the dirt off her face and hands. Even if she dies, let her be in comfort."

They heated some water and they put the girl there and they started washing her hair. When they poured the water over her head, Jush there fell down the gold! They poured some more water and Jush there piled up the gold. And they were so surprised that their hearts broke at such a sight. They bought clothes and food and everything with the money they got through her, and they fed her and they dressed her and they put her in a corner.

As time passed, she began to feel a little better, and as she laughed, roses bloomed on her cheeks. And as she remembered the bad days, and cried,



pearls and corals began to pour down her cheeks. And as they held her hand and took her out for walks, all the land on which she trod became covered with green grass.

After some years had passed, the girl said to the poor shepherd--who was not poor any more--"Pick roses from my cheeks and make a nice bouquet of roses and take them to the King's palace and sell them, crying, 'A bouquet of roses for an eye! A bouquet of roses for an eye! A bouquet of roses for an eye!'"

And he said, "All right." How could they say "No"? They could not say "No" to anything she said. So they picked roses and made a bouquet, and the shepherd took the roses to the palace and he began walking in front of the palace, crying, "A bouquet of roses for an eye! A bouquet of roses for an eye! A bouquet of roses for an eye!" The wicked aunt and the girl heard this. The aunt said, "Oh, daughter, let us go and buy some of those roses and pretend that they grew on your cheeks, and give them to the prince. We have grown tired of his demand for roses."

"All right," said the girl. They gave one of the other girl's eyes to the shepherd and got the bouquet of roses. They put the roses in a vase of water. In the evening when the prince came he saw the flowers, and he was greatly pleased. He said, "How did you get those roses?" And the girl said, "Did I not tell you there was a time for everything? Well, I laughed today and they grew on my cheeks." The prince smelled them, and oh, how happy he felt!

And on the other hand, the old man took that one eye home and he said, "Now stand still, and I shall put this eye in one of your eye sockets." he gave it a very gentle rub, and he prayed and blew on it, and Tup it fitted into its place, and the girl began to see like a mirror.

A few months later they made another bouquet of roses, and the man took them again to the palace. When he began to sell the roses, the wicked aunt

and her daughter knew that roses in this season could only have come from the cheeks of the beautiful girl, and that she must not be dead, after all. But the aunt said, "All right, let's give her her eye and get the flowers, and let her go to Hell! What do we care?"

And the old man brought the second eye home, and as he had done before, he rubbed gently on it, and prayed and blew on it, and Put it fitted into its place, and the girl began to see like a mirror.

On the other hand, the prince knew that he had the wrong girl, and he looked around to find the real girl. He was set on finding the girl. But this is what he did. He called his grooms and he said, "You will give a horse to every house in the land, and you will tell them that you will get the horses back by the end of the month." And they gave a horse to every house

When the beautiful girl heard about that, she asked her father to ask for a horse, too. And the father said, "Why, do you want trouble on your head?"

And the girl said, "I love horses, Father. Please get me a horse. I want to ride on it."

So the old man went and asked the grooms. He said, "I have a daughter, and she would very much like to have a horse. Can you please give us one?" The grooms brought a horse, and they tied the horse in the stable. Every day from that day on, the girl took very good care of that horse. She fed the horse and she scrubbed the horse, and as she walked in front of the horse the horse ate the fresh green grass that grew under her feet. And they became so used to each other that they loved each other. He was so well taken care of that nobody else could handle him except the girl.

When the time was over, and the horses were to be collected and taken back, all the other horses were just regular horses. But this horse was a different horse. When the grooms came to take him out of the stable, he would not let anyone get near him. He just rode the skies He did not want anyone to come

near him because he was used only to having the girl with him. So the grooms went back and they talked to the prince. They said, "Sir, an old man came and took a horse. But when we went to take it back, we could not get near that horse. He has been so well fed, and oh--he rides the skies! We cannot bring him back."

So the prince said, "Well, let me have a try at it." And the prince came, and he tried his hand at it, and no, it would not do. The horse would not let him come near. And the horse would ride the skies and neigh and neigh, and would not let anyone come near. And he came and asked the old man, "Have you fed this horse so well?"

no," said the old man. "I have a daughter. She has fed him."

The prince said "Well, if she is the only one who can take him out of here, let her come and do so, or else you will have to buy this horse

And the old man said, "No, Sir, we do not need any horse. I have no young son to use the horse."

right, then,' said the prince, "bring the girl to take him out.

And when she came and saw them all there, she began to laugh. As she laughed, roses bloomed on her cheeks. And as she came near the horse, grass kept on growing under her feet, and when the horse saw her he neighed and neighed, and jumped up and down. She held the horse by the reins and she led him out of the stable, all the time grass growing.

When the prince saw all that, he said, "Thanks to Allah <sup>grace</sup> I have found my girl." He sent the horse back, and went into the house and talked to the old man. He said, "Please, Sir, by the will of God I want to marry your daughter."

And the man said, "All right. If you want to marry her, let her be yours. They got the girl ready, and they made a wedding, and they took the girl to the palace.

When the prince got back, he said to the aunt, "For the tortures you have made this girl suffer you will be punished. You will go back to your country. Tell me how you want to go? What do you want to ride on? Do you want to go on a horse or on a sharp sabre?"

And the aunt said, "What shall I do with a sharp sabre? You use it on the neck of your sweetheart. We shall ride on horses."

And when they had told their wish, the prince had <sup>glacé</sup> them tied on the tails of two horses, and the grooms whipped the horses, and then the horses rose up in the air and began to run. They ran so fast, and dragged the woman and girl on the ground so, that piece by piece they fell apart, and each piece of their bodies was left at the foot of a different mountain.

And on the other hand, the prince and the beautiful girl were married and <sup>take -</sup> they lived happily ever after. They had their wish fulfilled. Let us go up <sup>to our mother</sup> and sit in their seats. <sup>family</sup>